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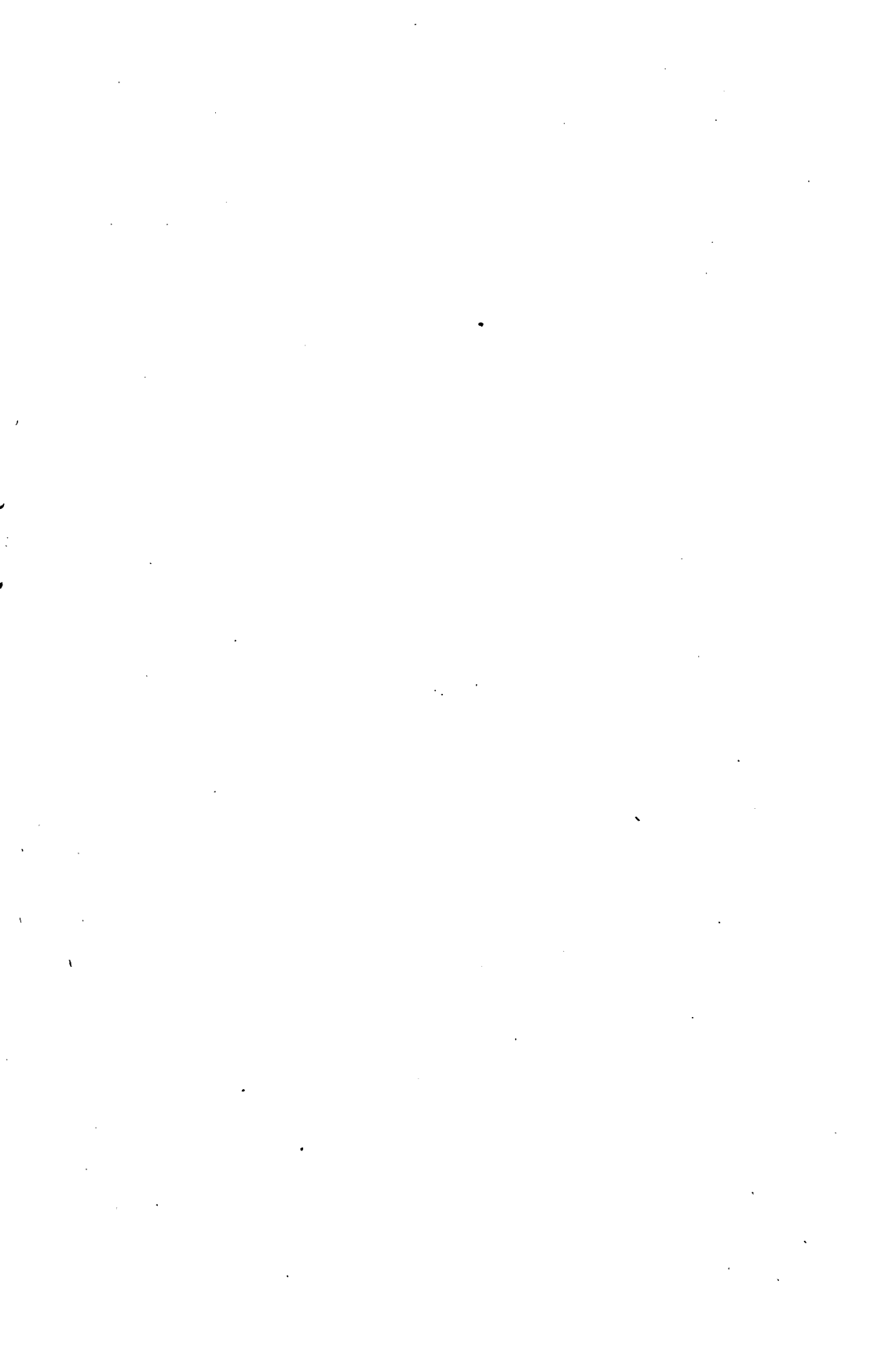
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OF
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The Presence of God

BY
CHESTER WOOD

Milwaukee
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IN MEMORY OF
MRS. GEORGE CLARKE HOUGHTON

WIFE OF THE REV. GEORGE CLARKE HOUGHTON, D.D.

*Rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, New York City, Known Everywhere
as The Little Church Around the Corner*

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NOTE.

Most of the verse and some of the meditations in this book have been published, and were first written for the author's personal use when a student at the General Theological Seminary, New York City.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

NEW LIFE.

When from the death of sleep thy soul awakes
Let it not dwell in sorrow on the past,
Regretful for the joy that could not last,
Or misdeed that all life a burden makes.
Take up new life with each new day that breaks.
Say not thy soul is sick and poor, held fast,
By circumstances now so overcast;
Or from the parent life its weakness takes.
O! back of these, and over all of these,
Arises the Eternal Will and Love.
Get but a glimpse, touch but the outer
shore,
Each morn, of these all-glorious mysteries,
And you can rise in strength and joy above
The old life to the new for evermore.

DE IMITATIONE CHRISTI.

No more for men there needs a flame
Up in the heavens at night
As if of men's giving life
To guide their steps aright.

Not ever a wandering cloud
Above them through the day,
To show them on or where to rest
Their weary feet on the way.

Forever now, in light or dark,
A glorious guide appears,
And we who follow Him shall feel
No hopeless doubts or fears.

For power and peace drawn from the life
Of Him of Nazareth,
Shall lead us on in glory through
A life that fears no death.

THE IDEA OF GOD.



THE practice of the Presence of God is the most helpful, the most joyful, of all human experiences. It is life and strength to every part of one: body, mind, and soul.

It purifies and ennobles every thought, act, and association; and one who practises it cannot be hopeless, sad, or lonely.

To be able to practise this effectively, however, one should have an idea of God that is definite; that one can hold in thought as something real.

This may sound like a strange saying in more ways than one; but it is only the truth, that to very many, the idea of God is a most misty, vague, and indefinite one.

How often have we read and heard quoted the words from the seventh verse of the elev-

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enth chapter of the Book of Job: "Canst thou by searching find out God?"

But why do they not finish the question and quotation, which is as follows? "Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

The answer is: No, we cannot hope to find out God unto perfection. Even in that day this fact was recognized: though men had found out much concerning God, as we may know from the very words which they apply to Him, for they call Him, Almighty: but the question implies that His perfections are so great, so infinite, that men cannot expect ever to find them all out, or to understand Him.

That must be our work through this life, not to live only in our own little earth-life, but to keep on ever searching out the perfections of God.

So shall we become more and more like Him, and so shall we become consciously His children.

This must be our joy in this world and

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through all eternity, a never ceasing joy and growth.

But since that question was asked, God has sent us a great help, a wonderful illumination. He has manifested Himself to us in our dear Lord Jesus Christ.

We do not need any more to search blindly for Him; we do not need to reason about Him. The Light shines for us, we have only to enter into that Light, and follow It, the Son of God.

Except in the life and teachings of our Lord Jesus there is no true and perfect idea of God. By Him we are taught of the Ever Loving, All Present Father Who knows of, and Who cares for, all, everything; flower and weed, bird and beast, and as well for His best beloved children, men.

Read with care and love of Him as told by the life of our Lord in the Holy Gospels.

Do not be afraid of getting what has been called an "anthropomorphic" idea of God.

If you can see our Lord Jesus, the Perfect

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Man, the Pattern Man, made Infinite, then you need not fear of getting "a little" idea of God.

It is true that we are only finite creatures, and though we cannot hope to understand or comprehend infinity, yet we can know of it, or apprehend it, in many degrees, low and high, inasmuch as we receive and follow the Lord Jesus.

Do not say that this Practice is a dream of fancy. Try it, and peace passing understanding without it, shall be yours.

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THE HIDDEN ALTAR.

Within Thy secret places,
O Father, let me stand;
Speak to me with the silence,
Touch me with unseen hand.

Then shall the hidden altar
Deep in my spirit's heart,
Burst into light that from it
Never shall depart.

But burning with mystic music
Fill all the night and day,
And ne'er shall I be lonely
Wherever leads the way.

SUNDAY.



FIRST light of a new day, first day
of a new week.

It is the Son's Day.

All the old order of the ancient days was changed by the institution of this day, by transferring the old day of rest, the seventh day of rest, of the Jewish Sabbath, to the great first day, the Son's Day.

Enter into new life this day especially. Drop every worldly care, and think of Him Who cares ever for you: Who gave His dear human life for you.

As you hear the bells ring out from the church, which word means, "The Lord's House," think of the mystery of it, the ringing of the bells.

The invisible waves of sound floating, quivering through the air: passing through walls of

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wood, and stone, and iron; entering through the strange doorways of your ears, and coming into the very inmost recesses of your thoughts.

It is a voice of God, one of the myriad ways in which He speaks to you.

In thought follow the sound through the air back to the bell. Follow the bell to the foundry, and to the dark, still place where it was formed, the mould in the ground.

Think of the molten metal, the fiery furnace.

Then think of the iron ore, how for ages it rested in the depths of the earth.

Then, of how back of that again, it was a burning liquid; still further than that, a flaming cloud, a mist; then, the Breath of God.

So, really, in the sound of the bell He speaks to us.

Think of the ages the bell has been in preparing, this Voice, to speak to you. The mystery of it; that ages are nothing to Him, our Father.

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That He Who is without beginning and without ending, the Maker of all things, visible and invisible, is ever with you.

THE LORD'S HOUSE.



WHEN you enter the church, think of those first words of the Prayer Book Service for Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him."

Leave all the voices of the world outside, for here you are coming especially into the Presence of God, His Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Angels.

Then think what you are! That your body is the very temple of the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful temple it is. How little we care for it as we ought. Think how clean and calm it should be for such a Guest. Let all the world be silent in it.

Think of your soul's heart as a pure, silent, flaming altar, where He may dwell.

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If you do this often, it will burn out the evil; it will drive out the bats and owls and wolves of darkness and sin; it will lighten your mind and face more and more, and at last, you will have His mark in your forehead.

Often say over to yourself the Communion Collect: "Almighty God, unto Whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

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THE DIVINE INBREATHING.

O, in night's stilly darkness
When all alone I kneel;
Or at the throngéd altar,
Divine One, let me feel
Within my soul vibrating,
O'ercoming sin and death,
The loving power eternal
Thy Mystic, Holy Breath.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.



WHEN you receive the Blessed Sacrament, think of our Lord coming to dwell within you.

Believe, do not try to reason about the Mystery; you are ignorant of the seemingly simplest things of your life, of your breath, of nearly everything.

He Who makes you to live, can make Himself come to you, verily, in the semblance of the bread and wine of the Holy Communion, the Eucharist.

So do not trouble yourself about this wonderful mystery, but remember that our Lord said: "Do this in remembrance of me;" and that He promised to be with those who obey Him always.

Can you doubt His word in any least respect?

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TRINITAS.

Now, dear Lord Jesus, let me see
And live a happy trinity,
Three lives in one and one in three.

True to my highest let me be
True to all men of all degree,
And true, O Father, God, to Thee.

So shall my spirit only be
A perfect one by being three,
One all divine at last in Thee.

THE HOLY TRINITY.



YOU should never allow yourself to be troubled about the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Remember that if you could understand It, you would be God, and you see how impossible that would be.

Remember that in the early morning you looked out and saw the world all dark, everywhere the still, dark air; then, at sunrise, the same air was flooded with light; and later, that the sound of the bells filled all the air and light.

The air was all in all, neither of the others could be without it.

This may comfort you as a rude symbol of the Trinity. For the idea of God is all in all. It was vague and dark before the coming of His Son of Light; then, lastly, the Holy Spirit from Both of Them speaks to us.

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MONDAY.

MORNING.

All in the East the sunrise harp
Up in the blue dusk flings
Above the quiet, waiting land
Its thousand-color strings.

Then to the wondrous harmony
That from God's face must shine,
Earth and its dwellers raise a song
Glad in His love divine.

DAILY WORK.



THE work out in the world begins again, and with its many duties, come also the many chances to practice the Presence of God.

Every morning when you rise from your bed you may think that you have risen from your old self; your old life of the day before, and that new life is waiting for you to accept it.

Think how through all the hours of the night while you have been unconscious in sleep, you have kept on breathing, and your heart has continued its beating; your food has been made into blood, and so on into nerves and all the wonderful and varied parts of your body.

Think of Him Whose power does all of this and thank Him.

Think how always absolutely naked you are

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in every way before Him, and how clean you should be in every part of yourself.

Ask Him to cleanse you and make your life pure in His sight and service.

When you put on your clothes, think of what you should be.

Ask Him to clothe you with purity and strength and hope: to keep your feet in the right way.

Even if you go no further in such exercises it will give you much strength and gladness for the day.

Do not think that you are taking up time, or losing a few moments from your daily work; but instead of that, realize that you are preparing for the great life eternal, by living a part of it, and in it, at that very instant, and that instead of any loss, there is the greatest gain in every way.

But there is more, much more, that you can do to glorify your life. You do not need to

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observe any hard and fast rules about these exercises. You may do any part of them, but the more of them that you do, the greater will be your peace and strength and happiness.

When you go to the table to eat, always say a brief thanksgiving; if not aloud, then mentally. These words have been helpful: "Bless, O Lord, these Thy gifts to our use, and us to Thy loving service, for Christ sake. Amen."

Then, at times when at meals you can remind yourself of the wonderful way in which the various articles of food have been grown and brought together and prepared for you. When you have finished, give thanks and say something like this: "For these and all Thy gifts, O Lord, I thank Thee. Amen."

So you will feed your spirit as well as your body. Thus shall you prepare for the life everlasting as well as for the little life of a day.

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EVENING.

When the great Western organ rolls
Its sunset chords on high,
When slowly grand the symphony
Fades down before the eye;
When dies the sound upon the land,
The great song in the air;
And rest and peace His children find
Wrapped in His mighty care.

OF THOSE GONE BEFORE.



WHEN you see those about you, think of those who have gone before you into the other life. Of what you did for them and what you might have done for them.

Seek the Presence of God to aid you, that you may help those still left with you, that you may be tender and helpful to them.

Remember them in all of your prayers, those living in the life beyond, and those living on this earth; and the dear Lord and His Holy Angels will help you and them.

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SHEKINAH.

The Holy place of God,
Of glories manifold,
Of power and peace and wonder
Greater than hath been told,
The dwelling-place of the Father
Brighter than burning gold;

Dream not thou canst find it,
Though through worlds wide apart
Thou search and search for ages
With speed of lightning's dart—
'Tis only found when His Spirit
Dwells in thy loving heart.

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GOD IN HIS WORLD.

In darkness and in light
Of valley, field, and height,

God is in His World.

In sunshine and in rain,
In every joy and pain,

God is in His World.

O, you who day by day
Sorrow upon your way,

God is in His World.

There is no weary lot
So low by Him forgot,

God is in His World.

Look upward to the Light,
Strive onward with thy might,

God is in His World.

Be thou not lonely, nor
Afraid and hopeless, for

God is in His World.

IN STUDY.



LEADING men of science of the present day are not what scientific thinkers were a few years ago. They acknowledge a "Great First Cause," and the "Unknown" or the "Unknowable" of one of the latest of our great writers on philosophy might almost as well be called the God of modern Theism. He is the Cause, the Maker of all.

So when you go to your studies, whatever they may be, of science, of things or of words and abstract thought, then in your mind go back beyond them all to the God Who made them all.

Without Him they are not. Without Him in your heart and soul the knowledge of them is a dead knowledge, and especially the gaining of it, is a hard, dry and profitless occupation.

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But think of the purpose, God's plan of it all. That by the guidance of the Holy Spirit men have been led through the long ages; of the slow growth of culture, of spoken and written thought. Think for what it all exists, to what "far-off divine event" it is all leading us; and that is, to know God.

Why not begin now, consciously, to realize that divine event?

The wholeness, the completeness of it, of course, is beyond the reach of the imagination of man to conceive; but the gladness and strength of the Presence of God is realized to a wonderful degree soon after you begin the practice of it.

And the ways are everywhere so many and so pleasant.

Linnaeus, the great botanist, said after seeing the unfolding of a blossom: "I saw God in His Glory passing near me and bowed my head in worship."

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And Tennyson said:

"Flower in the crannied wall
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all—
I should know what God and man is."

So in all studies; the deeper you go, the more you come into the Presence of God, and the more your feeling of gladness in it.

Thus you may say, changing a little the words of a great astronomer who said: "An undevout astronomer is mad," so you may exclaim, "An undevout student of any kind is mad."

Think when you begin to study: Now I am taking a step in the way, up the ladder, that leads me to God, a means that He has given me to bring me nearer to Him. Ask Him to help you to see aright.

Look back of the mere study to God. The

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whole aspect of the thought will be changed, made alive and glorified.

It will stretch back into the mystery of the infinite past, and forward into the mystery of the infinite future, it will thus link your life with the life of God. It will then be a shining light on the path of your earth-life as you walk therein.

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HEART OF THE WORLD.

What is the heart of the world for thee?
What life with thy life is thrilling and throbbing
All through the laughing and all through the sobbing
That in thy days and thy nights there may be?

Heart of the World, I long so for Thee,
All else without Thee is dead or is dying;
Dear Heart, for Thee all the wide world is sighing
Since Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee.

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WEDNESDAY.

THE TWO WINGS.

From out the depths to lift us
And carry us afar;
In glorious heights to drift us,
Two wings for men there are:

Two wings of beauty shining,
Are ready any day,
And realms beyond divining
Awaiting us alway.

Simplicity and purity,
These are the wondrous wings
To carry us most surely
High up to heavenly things.

High up to where will meet us,
Forms, faces, angel fair,
And heavenly voices greet us
Forever glorious there.

A NECESSARY CONDITION.



O successfully enjoy the practice of the Presence of God, simplicity and purity are needful.

This means very much. It means a continual working upward. Simplicity and purity work together. If you really practice the Presence of God, you cannot help being purified and made simple in your life. Every thought and word, every organ and function of mind and body made pure and simple; that is, acting simply as God meant it to act, and not in the unnatural, and thus impure, ways, in which we are so used to act.

Do you know what this means?

It means that all your life becomes glorified; that you are living in the company of God's Christ and His Holy Angels and Saints.

It means the Beauty of Holiness: an ex-

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change whereby you leave the life of littleness and meanness, and gain a life of great peace and gladness and strength.

You gain beauty for ashes: you live a life not limited by the farthest stars: you have a joy now and forever.

The practice of the Presence of God makes any place a temple of infinite wonder and beauty.

A coal cellar, when you enter it, if you have in your soul the Presence, becomes such a wonder and stretches out into a vision of the mysterious wisdom of God.

As you sit before your glowing coal-fire, or as you feel the pleasant warmth, trace back in thought the heat, as you did the sound of the bell. Then the dull, dirty block of coal becomes a wonder-working thing to carry you to God. So you may worship Him in everything and everywhere.

This does not mean that we may not use every helpful aid in the practice of the Pres-

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ence and in the worship of God; but in all aids we must not merely see them, but always God, to practice His Presence.

A well-known writer has said: "The ritualist finds the principle of reparation underlying all Christian worship. The magnificence of Cathedral or Abbey, and that even which he strives to bring into the humblest mission church, he offers as some reparation to Him, Who, for our sakes, had not where to lay His Head. His choral worship is an act of reparation for the cries of 'Crucify Him, Crucify Him.' He offers his substance for the flowers or the embroidery of the Altar because soldiers gave Him thorns and stripped Him of His garments."

And so through all forms of ceremonial worship. They are meet and right as a means to lead us to God, not as an end in themselves, when they only keep us from God. Let us use them thankfully as aids, stepping stones to Him.

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As you practice the Presence of God, you will attract to yourself innumerable helps, the aid of all Holy Influences. It is a certain law that good attracts good, and evil, evil. And we know that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

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THE DIVINE ILLUMINATION.

With all its winning wisdom
Let not the world erase
From out my spirit's vision
The Blessed, Holy Face.

Let not the world's great riches,
Its pomp of wealth and gold;
Let not the stress of hunger,
Of poverty and cold;

Not scorning and aversion,
Not love's most tender grace
Shut from my constant seeing
The Blessed, Holy Face;

Till all the ever changing
Earth's littleness is past,
And in His glorious presence
I stand all safe at last.

IN BUSINESS.



IN the great world of commercial life, you may also remember Him. Why should you never think of Him Who causes the mysterious power of electricity to travel along the wires with such speed and force, the invisible lightning, the terrible thing once so feared by all?

When you think of it, you see that it is a great step toward God: so was the discovery of steam, and the invention of wheels. How very greatly the power of man was aided by that discovery or invention of the far past time, we little realize in these later days.

Ezekiel saw the vision of the wheels full of eyes, which symbolize the universality of the Divine Presence.

As you see all these things of commerce, of business life, or see the names of them,

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things gathered from the spheres of the mineral, the vegetable and the animal world, then think of God Who made them all: Who gave man dominion over them. In this way try to keep in His Presence, so you may use them as He would have you use them, to His Glory, and to the present and the eternal welfare of yourself and your fellows. Only by so doing shall you have peace and gladness and strength.

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PAX VOBISCUM.

“My peace I leave with thee,”
O words most sweet to me,
Inheritance divine!
Thou longing, weary heart,
Rise and possess the part
Of what is freely thine.

O soul, bend not to care,
His peace is everywhere;
Only be wise to see
What things are worth thy thought;
All is too dearly bought
That keeps His peace from thee.

Not pleasure, fame, nor gold,
Nor aught the earth doth hold
Bring thee the gift with them,
Only when day by day
Thou followest the way
Of Him of Bethlehem.

No living thing to wrong,
Thy spirit, pure and strong,
Thy being thus shall keep;
His peace shall then be thine,
Peace, love, and calm divine
As endless ages sweep.

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MUNDA COR MEUM.

Cleanse Thou my heart and make it pure
E'en with Thy chastening rod;
Cleanse all that would from good allure
So I may see Thee, God:
As the lily from the water's bed
Strives up, the sun to see,
So from earth's darkness round me spread
O God! I strive toward Thee.

Cleanse Thou my heart and make it pure
To see beyond the clod
Of earthly things, how they endure
Not without Thee, O God!
The pure in heart and only they
Shall God Eternal see;—
So help me keep the shining way
That leads, O God, to Thee.

PEACE AND LIFE.



ANY one can be peaceful when surrounded by peace. But if you keep in the Presence of God you may be peaceful and happy in the midst of turmoil and unhappiness.

You can do more; you can help others to be peaceful and happy.

By so doing you lose none of your peace and happiness, but you add to your life such things more and more.

So whenever possible close your eyes, if need be, and place yourself consciously in the Presence of God. You can feel yourself lost in Him, and you are happy, beyond words to express, to be so. You feel yourself pass from the life that would hold you to a few feet of earth and air, a life of minutes and days, to a life of unending space and time; or rather,

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where ideas of space and time are not known.

Then, again, when you move about, think of your wonderful body, of the bones and muscles and nerves whereby you hold yourself erect and move; how you do this without a thought, and what a marvel it all is.

The man of science can tell you just what makes up a grain of wheat. If he is enough of an artist he can make such a grain, so perfect and natural in every respect that you, and he, himself, can not tell it from the natural ones when placed among them. Yet the essential part of it has escaped him. The grain he made will not grow. That which only God can give is not in it.

So with our bodies. We may have all, apparently; and yet, lacking the Presence of God, we are nothing. We may appear fair and perfect to men, but we cannot grow.

The mystery of pain and evil seems a great one. Our Lord Christ had need to suffer, and go down into the darkness of the tomb.

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The grain must be cast into the darkness of the earth; must be drenched with the storms of water before it can live its new life, or what we call its new life.

Is it carrying the analogy too far to say that we, also, must endure much which seems to us only trouble and evil before we can live again; before we can rise from the old life to the new, from the earth-life to the life of the Spirit?

If we keep the Presence of God in our souls, the Life everlasting, there is no doubt but such will be the result.

If not, who knows? The grain with the life, or the grain without it?

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SURSUM CORDA.

Into the quivering sunshine
Lift up, lift up your heart,
Up where Divine Life thrilling
Shall cause it so to start
And thrill and glow with gladness
That the gloom of sin and sadness
Shall forever from it part.

Lift up your heart forever
Into God's holy light,
In Christ's own loving presence
To dwell by day and night.
Then with a mystic splendor
Life shall grow strong and tender
Filled with His Spirit's might.

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THE VALLEY OF THE LILIES.

O, valley of the lilies
Where in the hushed, dim light,
The sweet flowers of the spirit
Show all so pure and white,

O, in the dark, damp valley,
Where grass grows rank and wild,
There bloom the spotless lilies
So sweet and undefiled.

Far, far above the valley
The sun in glory beams,
Down in the dusk the lilies
Just catch the fleeting gleams.

O, Thou Divine and Loving,
In Thy great love let me
Here in the vale of living
Among the lilies be.

WHEN YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN.



WHEN you have forgotten God, it may be for a long or a short period, then do not spend time in vain regretting. Think of what you have been doing in that time and what you would have done if you had not forgotten, if you had retained the presence of God.

It may be that you have done nothing very wrong. Then be thankful to Him for keeping you while you forgot Him and left Him for something, O, how unthinkably less worthy and valuable!

But it is probable that you have done something that you would not have done if you had kept in the Presence of God. Let not your shame and regret turn to indifference and hardness, but rather let it draw you nearer to Him.

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Let it make you realize your weakness, your need for help. Then why not seek the very Source and Fountain of all strength and life and joy? The Help will surely come if you will but ask for it in faith and love.

If you become ill or weak in body or mind, go to a quiet place, alone, if possible. You may know that you have done something contrary to the laws of God. No unhappiness or sickness can come to you unless such is the case; but you may be ignorant of wherein you have transgressed. If you know in what you have failed, ask His forgiveness, but ask anyway, whether you know or not.

Think to yourself; I am in His Presence, the Presence of Him Who is all health and strength and peace, all goodness and gladness. He is with me. He is all in all. If I live in the ways that He has set for me, then I am well and happy. I am going continually toward Him. If I go back, or try to live in the ways

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He has set for lower life, the mere animal life, then I, my spirit, my real self, will be miserable.

Make the firm resolve to live in His Presence, to live the life of the spirit. Then you will feel the Breath of Life come into you, in every tissue and every atom of your body, mind and soul. He will give you life abundantly.

If you use the service of a physician, or the aid of medicines, think that all are nothing without God. Think of how He has given men knowledge of the secrets of our bodies, and has endowed minerals and plants with various properties for our use.

God does not intend us in this life to despise such things, such aids. We ought to know this, because He has given us bodies needing food: has placed us where we need clothing and shelter. This fact shows the weakness of some prevalent modes of thought.

Should you happen to have any incurable weakness, then cling all the more strongly to

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God. Let this very thing which separates you from the world to a certain extent, let this be a link binding you to God. His Presence will more than compensate you for all else. There is no doubt at all that you have nothing given to you, but what is for your education, discipline, and good in the end.

When you receive the Blessed Sacrament, think what a mysterious and wonderful thing It is. That, though you may enjoy the presence of God at any time and in any place, yet there He comes to you definitely and in a way, a ceremony, that He Himself instituted and gave to us while He was on earth. Try, then, to see your dear Lord really, but spiritually. Realize that He is verily there present to meet you, to come and dwell with you, and that all about you are hosts of angels ready to minister to you if you will only allow them to do so. Can you imagine what this will mean to you in health and joy of life?

When you have received the Holy Commun-

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ion, then, remember that you are, that your body has become in a special manner, "the temple of the Holy Spirit."

Try to keep your body worthy of such a Guest. Try not to forget His presence.

So you will be kept from weariness and sickness and sin.

You cannot dwell in His Presence and be in misery.

THE CITY OF THE KING.

The city lieth all four square,
Four walls about it, grand and fair.

On every side to unknown height
The walls rise up, mysterious, white.

Upon the north, "Right Thought" they call
The great impenetrable wall.

And south, up high as eye can reach,
There towers the barrier named "Right Speech."

And guarding all the east secure
"Right Seeing" rises spotless, pure.

And west, ah, wonderfully there
"Right Doing" gleams through all the air.

And O, all glorious above
Is spread the heaven of God's love.

Where the city? it lies within
The soul of him that hateth sin.

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SATURDAY.

I do not ask, dear Lord, for light
To lead me on my way,
No mystic flame to gleam at night,
Nor wondrous cloud by day.
Dear Lord, I only pray,
My prayer to be
My thought and heart may e'er receive
The power from Thee
This to believe;—

To me shall come no doubt or fear,
No weary care control,
If I may know that Thou art near,
In love close to my soul;
As onward long years roll
Give this to me,
My thought and heart may e'er receive
The power from Thee
This to believe.

LIGHT.



AN English poet has told us in a wonderfully vivid way a story of a dream of darkness. He describes how light failed all over the earth, and a thick, black darkness prevailed. That men made great fires of forests and cities and gathered around them; and all the beasts of the earth, serpents and unknown animals tamed by fear, thronged near them.

Men and women lost reason and died from the fear of the awful darkness.

The whole picture is only one of what might well be real in such an event.

Think of this sometimes in the morning when you see the land being flooded with the glad light of a new day: then think how much worse off is the soul that is unenlightened by the Presence of God.

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As the poor, little lights which men made in the story of the poem proved so transitory and insufficient to dispel the great darkness, so with us when we try to attain light by any other means than God.

All learning, all wealth, all human companionship and love without the Presence of God in our life, is of no avail to us.

With the Presence of God we can be happy in any condition, with anything, or without anything. But if we have not His Presence we can never really be happy.

Truly, what an awful plight we should be in, if the sun did not appear to-morrow morning. The world, what a terrible place it would be!

Think of your soul, all dark, without the Presence of God in it. How full of fear, of strange forms of beasts and serpents of sin.

Think how different all your thoughts and body and life when this Light is in your soul,

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flooding all, all of you and your world, with glad strength.

Think that it rests with you whether you will have this Wonderful Light now and forever.

THE HILL OF ROSES.

Ever the way leads up, leads up,
Ever the path discloses
Stretches of stones and tangles of thorns
But still the hill of roses.

Patiently walking on and on,
Picking the fairest roses,
Until the light of the hilltop all
My gathering discloses.

O, if stones and thorns I gather,
Weary the way, ah, weary!
And at the last in the hilltop's light
How dreary, O, how dreary!

So the flowers the Master planted
To make the pathway cheery,
I'll gather them for my hilltop's rest
And never more be weary.

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THE KING'S SON.

Say not that you are weak and poor,
Save as you turn your face
Away from all the wondrous power
And riches of God's grace.

Say not that you are compassed 'round
With wretchedness and sin,—
For life is great and glorious
If He but dwell within.

Say ever in thy very heart
I am the Great King's son;
In love and peace and purity
I'll live when time is done.

